

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-05 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 ERDA-05 TRSE-00

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R 121937Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5111

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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TAGS: PFOR, FR

SUBJECT : GISCARD FIGARO INTERVIEW: DETENTE AFTER
THE MOSCOW TRIP

REF: PARIS 29339 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE LONGEST PORTION OF ISCARD
D'ESTAINQ'S NOVEMBER 12 INTERVIEW WITH FIGARO
(REFTEL) WAS DEVOTED TO FRENCH VIEWS ON DETENTE. IN
SURPRISINGLY CLEAR MESSAOE TO HIS RECENT MOSCOW HOSTS,
GISCARD STRESSED THAT FRANCE MUST FOLLOW ITS OWN, NOT
OTHERS' DEFINITINN OF DETENTE. IN FRENCH VIEW THIS
INCLUDES IDEOLOGICAL DETENTE. WHILE GISCARD REPEATEDLY
SAID THAT BREZHNEV HOLDS A SIMILAR OPINION, GISCARD
ALSO NOTED BLUNTLY THAT IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND
THAT WITHOUT FRENCH SUPPORT "THERE WOULD BE NO DETENTE
IN EUROPE" AND IMPLIED THAT SOVIET DETENTE POLICY IN
OTHER PARTS OF WORLD, SUCH AS IN ASIA AND IN INDIAN
SUBCONTINENT WOULD, IN THAT CASE, BECOME IMPOSSIBLE.
END SUMMARY.

2. GISCARD INTRODUCED DETENTE ISSUE BY EXPLAINING
THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT US AND USSR HAVE CLEAR, NOT
OUTDATED INTERPRETATION FRENCH VIEWS ON FUNDAMENTAL
FRENCH POLICY
DECISIONS SUCH AS DETENTE AND FRANCE'S DEPARTURE
FROM INTEGRATED NATO ORGANIZATION. TURNING TO DETENTE,
GISCARD SAID FRANCE CANNOT TIE ITSELF TO CONCEPTION
DECIDED ON ELSEWHERE. THERE HAS BEEN TENDENCY TO BE-
LIEVE FRANCE'S SUPPORT FOR DETENTE IMPLIED SHE WOULD
AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPT OTHER COUNTRIES' DEFINITIONS OF
IT. FRANCE IS FOR DETENTE. BUT SHE IS FOR AN INDE-
PENDENT POLICY OF DETENTE.

3. IN FRANCE'S VIEW THIS REQUIRES THAT PROGRESS MUST
BE MADE IN AREA OF IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION. GISCARD
SAID THIS THEME DID NOT STRIKE HIS MOSCOW CONVERSATION
PARTNERS AS AGQRESSIVE, ADDNG THAT HE HAD EXPLAINED
TO THEM THAT WITHOUT A CERTAIN DEGREE OF IDEOLOQICAL
DETENTE THERE WAS DANOER FOR DETENTE ITSELF. "IF
OUR SVSTEMS APPEAR TO ENCOURAOE IDEOLOOICAL AGORESSION
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WITH RESPECT TO EACH OTHER, TENSION AND ANTAQONISM
WILL BE CREATED AND DETENTE ITSELF WILL BE PUT IN
QUESTION." GISCARD ADDED, "I TOLD MR. BREZHNEV ON
THIS POINT THAT I DID NOT WANT TO REOPEN THE HELSINKI
DISCUSSION, PARTICULARLY ON SUBJECTS MOST IRRITATING
TO THE SOVIET UNION SINCE AN ACCORD HAD BEEN CON-
CLUDED. BUT I SAID THAT IT SEEMED NECESSARV TO ME
THAT IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION ITSELF BE EXPRESSED AND

MANIFESTED IN A SPIRIT COMPATIBLE WITH DETENTE."

4. ASKED HOW THIS APPLIED TO COMMUNIST PARTIES, GISCARD SAID THAT THE ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN FRANCE AND ELSEWHERE HAVE TO BE SEEN IN A DOMESTIC CONTEXT. HE WAS REFERRING ONLY TO IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION ACROSS FRONTIERS. THE SOVIET LEADERS HE HAD MET HAD PRACTICED A CERTAIN MODERATION IN THIS BATTLE OF IDEAS BEYOND FRONTIERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE LAST TWO YEARS. MOREOVER, GISCARD DID NOT EXPECT USSR TO RENOUNCE IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION. BUT HE REPEATED AGAIN THAT IT COULD INTRODUCE FURTHER MODERATION IN ITS EXPRESSION.

5. IF THIS IS NOT THE CASE, GISCARD THEN SAID THAT IT HAD TO BE KEPT IN MIND (AND WAS ALSO VIEW OF SOVIET LEADERS) THAT WITHOUT FRENCH SUPPORT THERE

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COULD BE NO DETENTE. INDEED, HE CONTINUED, THERE WILL BE NO DETENTE IN EUROPE, AND "WITHOUT EXAGGERATING OUR IMPORTANCE, I WOULD SAY, THERE WILL BE NO DETENTE IN THE WORLD." "IF ONE ASSUMES THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF SOVIET DIPLOMACY WILL BE A HELSINKI-TYPE INITIATIVE TOWARD SOME PARTS OF ASIA AND THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT, SUCH AN INITIATIVE WILL NOT BE PLAUSIBLE IF DETENTE IN EUROPE LACKS CREDIBILITY. AND ONLY FRANCE CAN GIVE IT THAT CREDIBILITY."

6. THE SECOND POINT TO BE KEPT IN MIND IN THIS CONTEXT, GISCARD SAID, IS THAT DETENTE IS A MOVEMENT IN PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT. IF ONE STOPS IT NOBODY CAN SAY WHETHER IT WILL REMAIN STABLE OR REGRESS. HE CONCLUDED HIS DISCOURSE ON THIS POINT: "THEREFORE, I REPEAT: NO DETENTE IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT FRENCH PARTICIPATION, AND DETENTE IS IN DANGER WHEN IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION IS EXCESSIVE."

7. COMMENT: WE WILL COMMENT FURTHER ON THESE PORTIONS IN NEXT DAY OR SO. FOR MOMENT IT STRIKES US A) THAT GISCARD MADE ONLY BRIEFEST EFFORT TO MAINTAIN OFFICIAL LINE THAT ALL WAS IN FACT SWEETNESS AND LIGHT IN MOSCOW; AND B) THAT, IN STATEMENT LIKELY TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE FOR FUTURE OF FRENCH-SOVIET RELATIONS, HE HAS PUT MOSCOW ON NOTICE THAT THEY CANNOT HAVE SPIRIT OF DETENTE AND PRACTICE POLITICAL WARFARE AT SAME TIME.

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